

Congressman Cuellar's FY17 Appropriations Language

Transparency in Detention Centers

"The Committee is concerned by reports of the separation of some family units after apprehension by CBP. ICE is expected to ensure that individuals being transferred from CBP to ICE custody, in ICE custody, or under ICE supervision have opportunities to report family separation incidents and to verify the status, location, and disposition of family members. ICE should also ensure that field officers are appropriately trained on the requirements of ICE's Parental Interest Directive and on mechanisms to reunite family units.

The Committee has included language under the OIG heading directing updates on its ongoing review of ICE and CBP detention facilities, including unannounced inspections. The Committee notes that ICE is working collaboratively with OCRCL to improve detention facility conditions, standards, inspections, and healthcare services; provide guidance on the use of segregation; improve disability accommodations; and ensure the safety and well-being of vulnerable populations. The Committee expects ICE to continue working with OCRCL to proactively improve detention facility conditions and oversight.

Within 30 days of the date of enactment of this Act, and semiannually thereafter, ICE shall provide an update on its oversight of family detention facilities, including recommendations for improvements made by the Advisory Committee on Family Residential Centers or as a result of ICE's community liaison initiative.

Within 45 days after the date of enactment of this Act, ICE shall report on its progress in implementing the 2011 Prison Based National Detention Standards (PBNDS) and requirements related to the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), including a list of facilities that are not yet in compliance; a schedule for bringing facilities into compliance; and current year and estimated future year costs associated with compliance. The Committee expects ICE to refrain from entering into new contracts or IGSA's that do not require adherence to the PREA and 2011 PBNDS standards. In addition, the Committee again encourages ICE to consider collaborating with the National PREA Resource Center, which is supported by the Department of Justice, to help facilitate PREA compliance.

House Report 114-215 directed ICE to brief the Committee on its policies and practices for ensuring the safety of vulnerable populations in immigration detention facilities, along with recommendations for further improvements to better protect these detainees. The Committee looks forward to receiving this overdue briefing as soon as possible."